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Hungarian Accent On Economic Planning

A 3-day conference on planning last week--pegged to the 25th anniversary of Hungary's first economic plan--was obviously intended to show that central planning is still a basic element of Budapest's decentralized economic reform (NEM). Some discordant notes were struck by Soviet planners attending the conclave, who took the occasion to stress Soviet-style orthodoxy while the main Hungarian speakers dwelt largely on the duality and increasing complexity of the NEM, Soviet deputy planning chief Racsurin reminded listeners that diversity of planning forms aside, the most important point in "some states" is adherence to and further development of "the socialist principles of planning." In his keynote speech on the 30th, party leader Kadar hastened to improve the Hungarian side of the ledger and struck a careful balance between the importance of "national characteristics" and the "general international rules of the building of socialism."

Both the planning conference and a forthcoming law on the role of the national planning office were announced by Premier Fock in May--an obvious counter to any Soviet apprehension over the looser edges of the NEM. It is difficult to say whether the new planning law, which has not yet been publicly unveiled, will be more than eyewash to satisfy Moscow. Kadar asserted in his speech that "the competence of the national planning office must be widened", a judgement which will undoubtedly be reflected in the new legislation. Conceivably, the new law could assign to the national planning office some of the monitoring duties previously performed by other central organs which did not act promptly to check last year's unsettling economic performance. This move would not be a "recentralization" of the economy, but would reflect the regime's interest in improving the already-assigned role of the central economic organs.

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Czechoslovak Youth Congress

The first Congress of the Czechoslovak Union of Youth (SUY) ended on Sunday after a four-day session. In attendance were 1293 delegates reportedly representing 817,000 members and 900,000 Youth Pioneers. Forty seven foreign delegations also made the trip to Prague.

The principal document "The Main Tasks of the Socialist Union of the SUY Young Pioneers Organization after the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC)" has not been published yet but probably contains much of the same kind of self-congratulations for past achievements and "we can do better in the future" rhetoric, which has characterized the published speeches. The KSC has been well represented. Husak in a major speech recognized that problems exist for the SUY, but accentuated the positive. Only as the presentations of the other speakers are published will we learn whether the problems facing Czechoslovak youth were discussed.

The Czech and Slovak press has carried on a discussion of youth problems over the last several months. It has been bemoaned the fact that only 20% of the young people between 15-30 have been organized and that a large part of the worker and agricultural youth "stand apart" from the SUY. Articles have also criticized youthful admiration for western "fashions" and an unwillingness to become involved. In mid-September the party paper Rude Pravo said that there are "quite a few people who stand on the periphery of society and therefore give way to influences that have absolutely nothing in common with the humanism of the socialist world". This same article admitted that the SUY had "great difficulty" in reaching this section of the young. In the recent past there have also been a series of articles dealing with criminality among youth.

This Congress served several functions. It provided international recognition for the SUY. It offered those who have joined (whether for career or other reasons) a chance to offer 25X1 each other mutual support and to have a good time also. The regime used the occasion to show once again how successful it has been in overcoming the past. Despite the "think positive" approach, however, Czechoslovak youth continue to worry the party leadership.

Cultural Union Reestablished

More than 230 delegates attended the constituent congress of the Union of Czech Theater Artists on 2 October and heard Jan Fojtik, Central Committee secretary for ideology, declare the "necessity of a resolute struggle against petty-bourgeois

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moods." No details of the debate have been made public. The provisional leadership of the union, elected almost two years ago when its predecessors disbanded, did submit a report to the Congress openly announcing that the process of consolidation in the culture field has been "extremely difficult." The predecessor unions were accused of having stood "in the front ranks of the counter revolutionary offensive."

The artists will have little of the independence they possessed even under Novotny. The leadership of the Union is composed of non-entities whose function will be to control rather than stimulate artistic creativity.

The head of the Slovak Central Committee Department for Culture recently laid out the party approach to culture. Special courses will be staged for leading workers of the artists' union, and cultural editors of the newspapers. Cultural work is to be closely evaluated. He indicated that plans are only "gradually" being drafted and that "we will have to review the entire management sphere of culture to see whether it is capable of implementing the line of party policy."

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Yugoslav Premier Arrives In Cairo Today

Premier Bijedic is scheduled to begin his first official visit to Egypt today. Bijedic will stay in Cairo for at least six days. Yugoslavia has been a staunch supporter of Egypt in its struggle against Israel, and Bijedic will be anxious to get an up-to-date reading on the situation in the Middle East as well as on the status of Soviet-Egyptian relations. For his part the Yugoslav premier will also use the occasion to discuss nonalignment and Belgrade's desire to inject Mediterranean problems into any discussion of European security.

The Bijedic visit is just one indication of the good state of relations between the two states. The Egyptian Minister of War, Ahmad Sidqi, is currently on an official visit to Yugoslavia as the guest of the Yugoslav Minister of Defense, General Nikola Ljubovic. 25X1 [REDACTED]

"The Inspector General" Is Banned In Romania

The Lucia Sturdza Bulandra Theater's production of Gogol's play, "The Inspector General" has been banned not only in Bucharest, but from being performed anywhere in Romania. The principal target of the play is the poor performance of provincial administrative figures, a criticism that hits too close to home in Romania. In announcing the ban, the party daily Scinteia, described

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the production as a distortion of the work of a great artist.



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